United Nations S/2001/305

Security Council

Distr.: General
30 March 2001
English
Original: French

Letter dated 29 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to an extract, concerning the western Balkans, from the conclusions of the Presidency of the European Council, which held meetings in Stockholm on 23 and 24 March 2001 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Pierre **Schori**
Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations

01-31330 (E) 300301 300301

Annex to the letter dated 29 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Extract from Presidency conclusions of the European Council, Stockholm, 23 and 24 March 2001

Western Balkans

The European Council reiterates the European Union's strong and continued commitment to stability and peace in the region, which remains a strategic priority for the Union. It recalls its firm attachment to the principles of the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of the countries of the region.

After meeting President Trajkovski, the European Council adopted a declaration on the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It invites the High Representative, Javier Solana, to follow the situation in the region, to stay in close touch with the leaders and, in consultation with the Commission, to make recommendations to the Council.

The European Council expresses its appreciation for the readiness of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbian authorities to resolve the conflict in southern Serbia peacefully and welcomes the start of talks in the framework of the Covic plan to reach a negotiated settlement. The European Council confirms the European Union's readiness to assist this process and notes in particular the role played by an increased presence of the European Union Monitoring Mission in the area. In this context the European Council also calls on all parties to take real confidence-building measures to defuse tensions in the area, including the release of all Kosovo Albanian political prisoners.

The European Council calls on Montenegro and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian authorities to agree on new constitutional arrangements within a federal framework through an open and democratic process in order to contribute to stability in the region.

The European Council calls on the new government in Bosnia and Herzegovina to increase its reform efforts in order to fulfil by mid-2001 all the conditions set out in the European Union "road map". It underlines that the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina can only move towards European integration in the framework of a unified state.

Building on the outcome of the Zagreb Summit, which offers to all countries the prospect of accession, the European Council recalls the importance of regional cooperation, including on justice and home affairs matters. It notes in particular the need for concrete action to assist the Balkans in dealing with illegal migration through the region. The stabilization and association process remains the main instrument to further the process of moving closer to European structures. The European Council recalls also in this regard the important contribution of the Stability Pact, as well as of other regional initiatives.

The Council welcomes the progress which is being made across the region in bringing individuals to account for abuses of power and criminal offences which were committed under the cover of previous undemocratic regimes. Living up to the Union's political and economic conditionality is an essential part of the stabilization and association process. This includes full cooperation with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.